



The Sixty-sixth Season of  
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin  
**Concerts**

National Gallery of Art  
2,664th Concert

**Octuor de France**

Jean-Louis Sajot, *clarinet and artistic director*  
Yuriko Naganuma and Jean-Christophe Grall, *violin*  
Laurent Jouanneau, *viola*  
Paul Broutin, *cello*  
Michel Fouquet, *double bass*  
Antoine Degremont, *French horn*  
Jacques Thareau, *bassoon*

March 9, 2008  
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm  
West Building, West Garden Court

*Admission free*

## Program

Presented in honor of the exhibition

*In the Forest of Fontainebleau:*

*Painters and Photographers from Corot to Monet*

(Performed without intermission)

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

*String Quartet in F Major* (1903)

Allegro moderato; très doux

Assez vif; très rythmé

Très lent

Vif et agité

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

*Septet in E-flat Major*, op. 20 (1800)

Adagio; allegro con brio

Adagio cantabile

Tempo di menuetto

Tema con variazioni

Scherzo

Andante con moto alla marcia; presto

## The Musicians

Currently the only French ensemble of its type, the Octuor (Octet) de France was founded in 1979 by clarinetist Jean-Louis Sajot. Its repertoire includes classical and romantic chamber music, contemporary music, and music for film. In addition to rediscovering and performing forgotten works from the past, the ensemble regularly commissions new works from living composers. With many international tours to its credit, the octet makes its third appearance at the National Gallery on this occasion, having previously accompanied the silent films *L'homme qui rit* in 2005 and *Au bonheur des dames* in 2006. On this visit to the Gallery, the octet performs music for both film and concert repertoire. Yesterday, the group presented the world premiere performance of new film music by Gabriel Thibaudreau, performed as the Gallery's film department showed silent films by Max Linder in honor of the exhibition *In the Forest of Fontainebleau: Painters and Photographers from Corot to Monet*.

The octet has had the honor of undertaking similar projects for film festivals overseas in Athens and Cannes, and in the United States in New Orleans and New York City, and at Harvard University and the Telluride Film Festival, among other venues. The ensemble's extensive discography includes CDs devoted to compositions by Brahms, Françaix, Haydn, Mozart, Reicha, Schubert, and von Weber.

Clarinetist Jean-Louis Sajot was born in Nevers, France, where he began his musical studies before entering the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris where he obtained a first prize for clarinet. After a short period with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Lyon, he joined the Orchestre National de France in 1976. He continues in its membership today, having played under such celebrated conductors as Claudio Abbado, Leonard Bernstein, Charles Dutoit, Eugène Jochum, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Mazur, Ricardo Muti, Seiji Ozawa, and Wolfgang Sawallisch. In 1979 he founded the Octuor de France, and remains the ensemble's clarinetist and artistic director.

Born in Japan, violinist Yuriko Naganuma began her musical studies in Tokyo and continued them in France, where she obtained a first prize at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris in the class of Michèle Auclair. She also won first prize at the Indianapolis and Montreal International Competitions. Based in France, Naganuma gives a series of concerts each year in Japan. In 1997 she recorded Jean Francaix's *Violin Concerto* under the direction of the composer with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo.

Born near Paris, violinist Jean-Christophe Grall studied the violin with Madame Marie-Claude Theuveny at the Conservatoire National du Région de Saint-Maur des Fossés and then at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris, where he obtained first prize for violin. After working with a number of symphony orchestras, Grall pursued his passion for chamber music by joining the Octuor de France.

Born in Suresnes, near Paris, violist Laurent Jouanneau first studied the violin under Maryvonne Le Dizes but quickly showed a preference for the viola. Before joining the Octuor de France in 1991, Jouanneau was the principal violist of the Orchestre Jean Paillard and the Orchestre Symphonique Français. He divides his time between playing with the Octuor de France and teaching the viola.

Cellist Paul Broutin moved from Briare, France, to the Paris region at an early age. He entered the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris where he obtained a first prize for cello in the class of Bernard Michelin. After postgraduate chamber music studies, he joined the Octuor de France in 1988. He pursues a dual career as a teacher and a member of the Octuor de France.

Born in Paris, bassist Michel Fouquet studied under Michel Delanoy before becoming a disciple of the famous family of double bass players, the Cazaurans. A lifelong chamber music enthusiast, Fouquet joined the Octuor de France in 2002.

Bassoonist Jacques Thareau was also born in Paris. A pupil of Amaury Wallez at the Saint Maur Conservatoire National de Région, he finished his studies in 1986 and was appointed first bassoonist of the French National Youth Orchestra in the same year. Since then he has worked regularly with many of the most celebrated French orchestras. He joined the Octuor de France in 1997.

Born in Canteleu in the North of France, Antoine Degremont plays the French horn with the octet. He studied music in Rouen and currently plays regularly with the Orchestre National de France, the Orchestre de Paris, and the Orchestre de l'Opéra de Paris. He was the principal French horn player with the Orchestre Symphonique Français before joining the Octuor de France.

## The Program

Written two days before his twenty-ninth birthday, Ravel's *Quartet in F Major*, in his own words, "was animated by a will to achieve musical construction, which is manifested in it far more clearly than in the compositions that preceded it." The quartet received its first performance on March 5, 1904, under the aegis of the Société Nationale in Paris. Although its success helped to propel Ravel into the forefront of French musicians of his time, it did not satisfy him completely. Contemporary critics made comparisons between Ravel's quartet and Debussy's *String Quartet in G Minor* (1893). This was a discussion that was unacceptable to both composers and it caused their relationship, once quite cordial, to become distant. The iciness between them eventually thawed when Ravel was contemplating a modification of his quartet's *Finale*. He asked Debussy for his opinion, to which the latter responded: "In the name of all the gods of music, and for my sake, do not change anything you have written." Ravel's biographer Armand Machabey, in his assessment of the quartet, states: "There are no disturbing patches of banality or emptiness; everywhere imagination and richness of ideas are in control, with a perfect balance of proportions, purity, and transparency of sound such as Ravel only attained elsewhere in his piano work *Jeux d'eau*."

Ever the innovator, Beethoven was the first composer to write for mixed chamber ensembles of winds and strings. His *Septet in E-flat Major* for violin, viola, cello, double bass, clarinet, French horn, and bassoon, contrasts brilliance with restraint and virtuosity with intimacy. The contrast is already present within the first movement, as the opening *Adagio*, a stately serenade, is followed by an *allegro con brio* (lively, with fire) that completes the first movement in fully developed sonata form. The lively *Minuet* and *Scherzo* frame an intimate *Tema con variazioni*, creating contrasts between movements, while the final movement—apparently closing the work with a stately march—suddenly breaks into a brilliant *presto* designed to show off the skills of the first violinist.

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Kathleen Shimeta, *mezzo-soprano*

Martin Hennessy, *pianist*

Music of Gena Branscome

In honor of Women's History Month

March 12, 2008

Wednesday Afternoon, 12:10 pm

West Building Lecture Hall



**Parisii Quartet**

Jérôme Correas, *baritone*

Emmanuel Strosser, *pianist*

Music by Fauré, Hahn, Ravel, and Tailleferre

Presented in honor of *In the Forest of Fontainebleau:*

*Painters and Photographers from Corot to Monet*

March 16, 2008

Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court

For the convenience of concertgoers  
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the  
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,  
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of  
the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

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